

stationæry

issue 2

who do you think of
when you hear old jazz songs?

WHAT YOU READ

intro: Keep Your Head Down
Nebulae
Bobby's Auspices: A Better Tomorrow
Conversation with an Actor
The Father Weeds
Hop
Roy's Old Royl
Boris: a poem in 29 stanzas
Dec. 5/ '03
Idea for a Play

WHAT YOU SAW

cover: Places We're From
Artistic Photo #1017b version 3
The Tao of the Lippizaner
Yard Sale Polaroid
Extreme Table Tennis
D 'n A
There it Goes
foot by foot
Cancer Panda
This Man is Now a Monster
Ozclage
untitled
Summer Afternoon, St. Andrews
Siesta Time
Boo.
Asscake
untitled
Wicky Wick

Ilya Zaychik
Anca Szilágyi
Uzodenma Okehi
Aliya Pabani
Natahniel G. Moore
Patrick Eamonn
Matthew Hollett
Paul Kremsky
Melissa Reiter
Daniel Cambil

Daniel Spitzberg
Michael Audi
Michael Hunt
Matthew Hollet
Mike Twohig
Israel Charney
Ilya Zaychik
Danger Dan
Frank Barbara
Daniel Spitzberg
Fianna MacGregor
Anna Seifried
Andrew Ladd
Noa Landes
Nick Phelps
Michael Hunt
Ynès Wu
Frank Barbara

stationæry is brand new! We are a Montréal-based literary magazine built on story telling; all forms of fiction, non-fiction, reporting, poetry, personal reflections, haikus, et al, and all 2-dimensional forms of art.

We welcome submissions always. Our deadlines are on an ad hoc basis (~November 20th) . Electronic mail is preferable for all submissions - sending in material on the back of a letter carrier must be accompanied by a return envelope with sufficient postage. We encourage each submission to be sent with a brief biographical blurb and any highlight, such as a recent or upcoming project, publishing, gallery showing, etc.

Annual subscriptions are available to Canada (CDN\$8.00), the US (US\$9.00), and abroad (US\$12.00).

MAILING ADDRESS:

STATIONÆRY
4456 AVENUE DE L'HÔTEL-DE-VILLE
MONTRÉAL, QUÉBEC H2W 2H5
CANADA

STATIONAERY@YAHOO.COM



COPIES AVAILABLE AT THESE FINE ESTABLISHMENTS:

MONTRÉAL:

The Word
469 Milton
Argo Bookshop
1915 Rue Ste. Catherine O.
Café Books
1420 Rue Stanley
Zeke's Gallery
3955 Boul. St. Laurent
Vortex Bookshop
1855 Rue Ste. Catherine O.
Doublehook
1235A Greene Ave., Westmount
Footnotes
1454 Rue Mackay
Mediaphile
1901 Rue Ste. Catherine O.
Le Point Vert
4040 Boul. St. Laurent
Grafton Books
1917 Rue Ste. Catherine O.
Local 23
23 Bernard O.
Monastiraki
5478 St. Laurent
CD Esoterik
1841C Rue Ste. Catherine O.
Co-op Bookstore
1455 de Maisonneuve O. H-637
Casa del Popolo
4873 Boul. St. Laurent
Café Esperanza
5490 Boul. St. Laurent
La Gruta Café
77 Bernard O.

TORONTO:

Pages Bookstore
256 Queen Street W.

NEW YORK:

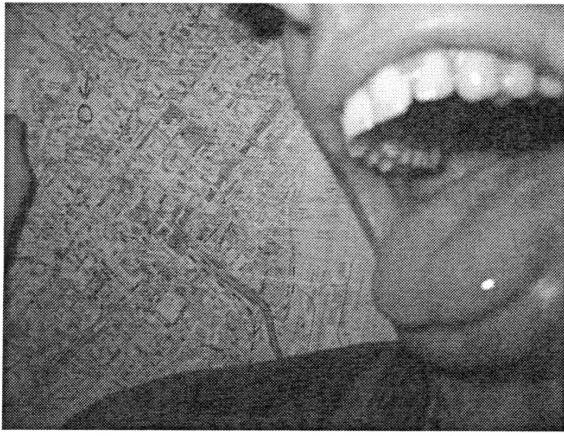
St. Mark's Bookshop
31 Third Avenue

CHICAGO:

Quimby's Bookstore
1854 W. North Ave.

BOSTON:

LPC
549 Columbus Avenue



Keep Your Head Down

Ilya Zaychik

"Artistic Photo #1017b
version 3"
Michael Audi, 2004

"Excuse me," she said, and I thought she would ask what was in the pizza, but she follows with, "are you Jewish?"

"Yeah," I answered with hesitation, surprised by the question on the one hand, and excited on the other to try out my ragged 'how-to-deal-with-gentiles' manual, compiled through years of Jewish day school and integration into the secular world in which I spend a lot of time.

"I have a question. I'm the captain of the McGill cheerleading team and" — my heart and my shoulders sank — "I was wondering about the upcoming Jewish holidays. Are they, like *really* important? Because there's a girl on the team who wants to miss practice."

I explained to her the significance of Rosh Hashanah, the new year, a fresh beginning with god, and if that doesn't matter to you, with your peers, and if that doesn't matter to you, with yourself. If *that* doesn't matter to you, might as well jump off a tall building. I then proceeded to discuss Yom Kippur, the day of atonement, the holiest day of the year, a day when you admit to whatever forces you deem important that you fucked up a good many times more than you didn't, and she seemed disappointed. Disappointed she would be forced to yield to entities greater than McGill cheerleading. And I seemed disappointed. Disappointed that my Judaism had just been equated, on some level, with McGill cheerleading.

Now I'm not one of those Jews who throws rocks at women who don't wear long skirts, or even one of those Jews who separates milk and meat, but I am one of those Jews. It's a sizable chunk of my identity right now. (Which is why I found myself wanting to stab that fucker who spends his days holding up a giant sign with anti-semitic messages on it in front of the main gates at McGill. Not hold his hand and make him understand that Jews are really not the cause of everyone's problems and shouldn't be converted to Protestantism en masse — because he will *never* understand — but *stab* him. It's not an impulse I'm proud of — I thought I was better than that. But I'm not. Maybe this Yom Kippur I'll understand).

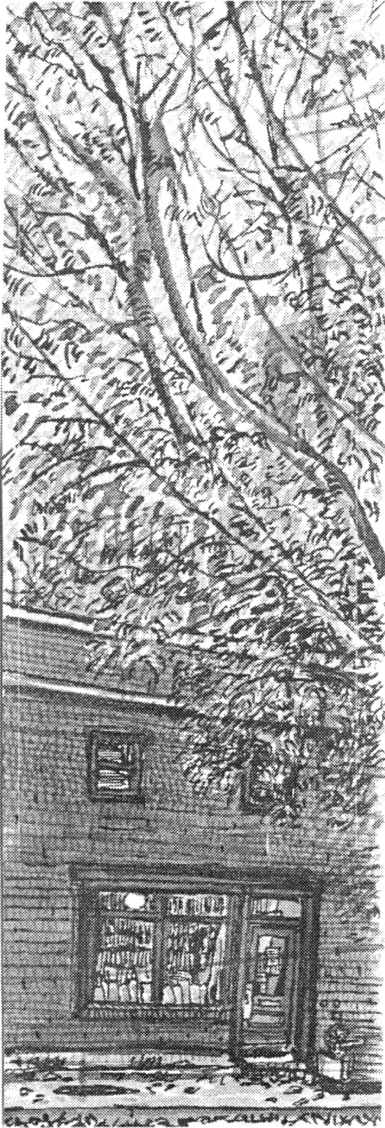
Her puzzled expression at my succinct summary of the religious implications of the Day of Atonement and the New Year told me all I needed to hear. I could tell she wanted me to get to the good parts.

"So, like, what do you do?" she cocked her head to one side, removing her freckled hand from the sweatshirt pocket and bringing it to her headband which held back bouncy, orange, Irish-Catholic hair.

I described, patiently, what 'we' 'did', wanting all the while to just tell her that she damn well better give her cheerleader the time off if she had any respect for

The Word

469 MILTON STREET
MONTREAL H2X 1W3
TEL.: 514-845-5640

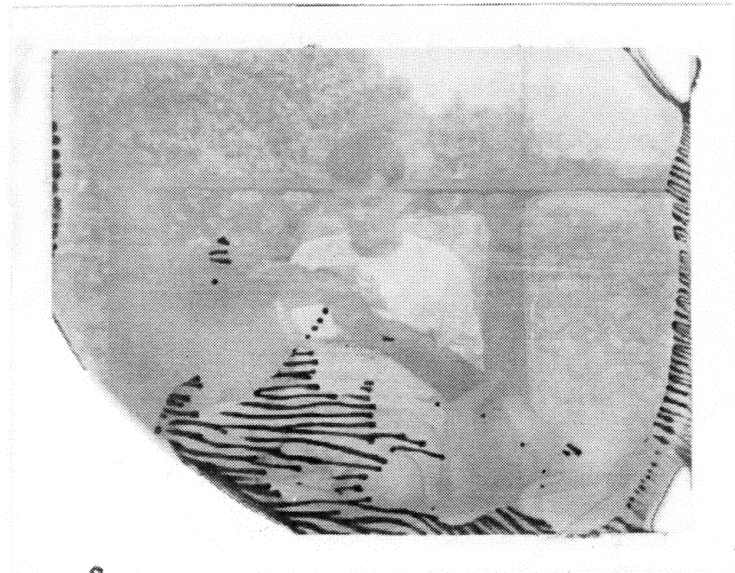


anything greater than her sweatpants. I resented her for implying that her player (if cheerleading is even a sport, which is quite debatable) was just trying to skip practice. Then I thought I should have lied, and told her I was a Christian missionary looking Jewish undercover and avoided this whole awkward mess. But I didn't, because I don't have that kind of composition.

I'm not mad at the girl for not caring what the high holidays are all about. Sometimes other people don't value the things you value, and you have to grant them that right (which puts my desire to stab the aforementioned fucker in a whole new light. Perhaps it would be more, say, just of me, to stand next to him with a sign saying 'cotton hasn't been the same since they freed those niggers'. If he gets a sign, why shouldn't I? While I would never hold up a sign like that, even if I truly believed it, he proudly and unabashedly stands there like a too-skinny, failed attempt as Shaft's bodyguard with his repugnantly ridiculous religious rhetoric for the world to see, and hopefully discard. With the exception of evangelists or Klan members, or both, everyone should be embarrassed that this man is 99.9% genetically identical to them). Besides, her pom-poms and routines might be her bible, and Sunday afternoon football games against Concordia her high holidays, and I don't give a shit about that. Then again, how many people have been killed for being cheerleaders?

She turned away, exclaiming to her co-captain, "he's Jewish!" and proceeding to relate the details of the conversation to her. I could exclaim nothing to no one as I was working alone, so I sighed, as I so often do when outcomes are just beyond my reach. Tomorrow, I will walk by the man at the gates who thinks I should accept Jesus Christ as my Lord and Savior and do the same.

Matthew Hollett



It was old, unopened film, found at our yard sale along with the polaroid. She photographed me on the back porch, browsing the instruction manual. wait!, i said. ~~wait!~~ not yet. the directions say... but it was too late. and look what happened.

Nebulae

Anca Szilágyi

It was ridiculously easy. The scientist, you see, was remarkably affable and lazy. I entered his office (as I often do), and found him lying in his hammock, gazing at the glow-in-the-dark stars. He held an old hacky-sack in his palms, as if he had been tossing it earlier, but stopped in deep contemplation. In the silence, I heard the hum of the air ducts and the faint drip of a pipe.

"Gregory," I said.

I switched on the overhead lights. He started.

"Gregory," I repeated. "Let's get some coffee."

"Hm? Oh, sure," he said. "Be right there." He climbed out of the hammock, stumbled to the washroom. He always went to the washroom before we got coffee. This, I did not quite understand. But it doesn't matter. I went to his desk, photographed his charts, drawings, frantic scribbles.

We drank our coffee, I with my heart pounding. The Styrofoam cup was more vexing than usual. The scientist smiled at me sheepishly.

"Your cheeks are pink," he said. I tried not to panic.

"Gregory, dear, there's something I have to tell you."

"What's that?" he asked, leaning in, cocking his head to the side. His lips were chapped. Brown curls framed his forehead.

"I—"

"Yes? Yes?" His hands, palms down on the table, inched closer to me. The ventilation system of the cafeteria rattled quietly in our ears.

"I'm leaving the university. Going back to Andorra tonight."

"Oh!" He sat back.

"Yes. I know it is sudden. Family business, you see."

"The casino?"

"Yes," I said, looking to the side. "The casino." I placed gravity on the last word. Solemnity.

"Well, are you coming back? Will I see you again?"

"I'm afraid not." I furrowed my brow, grimaced, in simultaneity with the crumbling of his face.

"Oh, that's terrible," he said, looking away.

"I'm sorry," I said, patting his hand.

"Me too. Me too."

I got up.

"Well, I have a plane to catch."

"Geez," he muttered. "Okay. Well, I hope you'll write."

"Of course," I said, hugging him, almost meaning it, wanting to.

"Farewell. Good luck to you."

"And to you," he said, returning the hug.

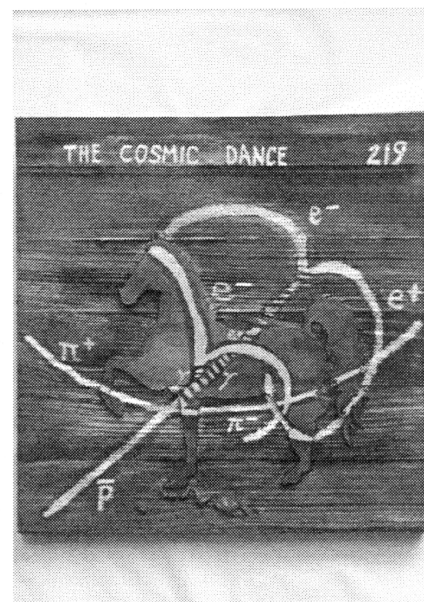
I left the building, nodding one last time to Leonard at the security desk, warmed by an incandescent lamp. The night was stark, the air ice.

*

"They're just stars," he said once, chomping down on an empanada. His head hung down, looking at the table. He was balding ever so slightly. "They have no effect on our lives, they're just entertainment." I reached over and wiped a spot of cheese off the corner of his mouth. Just stars.

*

I arrived in Sydney the next day, was at the lab by dusk. Clutching my camera in the palm of my hand, I approached the front door, the dead jeep



"The Tao of the Lippizaner"
Michael Hunt, 2004, acrylic
on sandblasted redwood

surrounded by the silhouette of an odd, still clump — kangaroos. A long ear twitched against the purple sky. As I parked, they scattered. I never liked them; every time I come out here they seem to be conspiring against the rest of the world, hiding plans of the universe in the goop of their pouches, whispering to each other in awkward schoolyard groups.

They are legion.

*

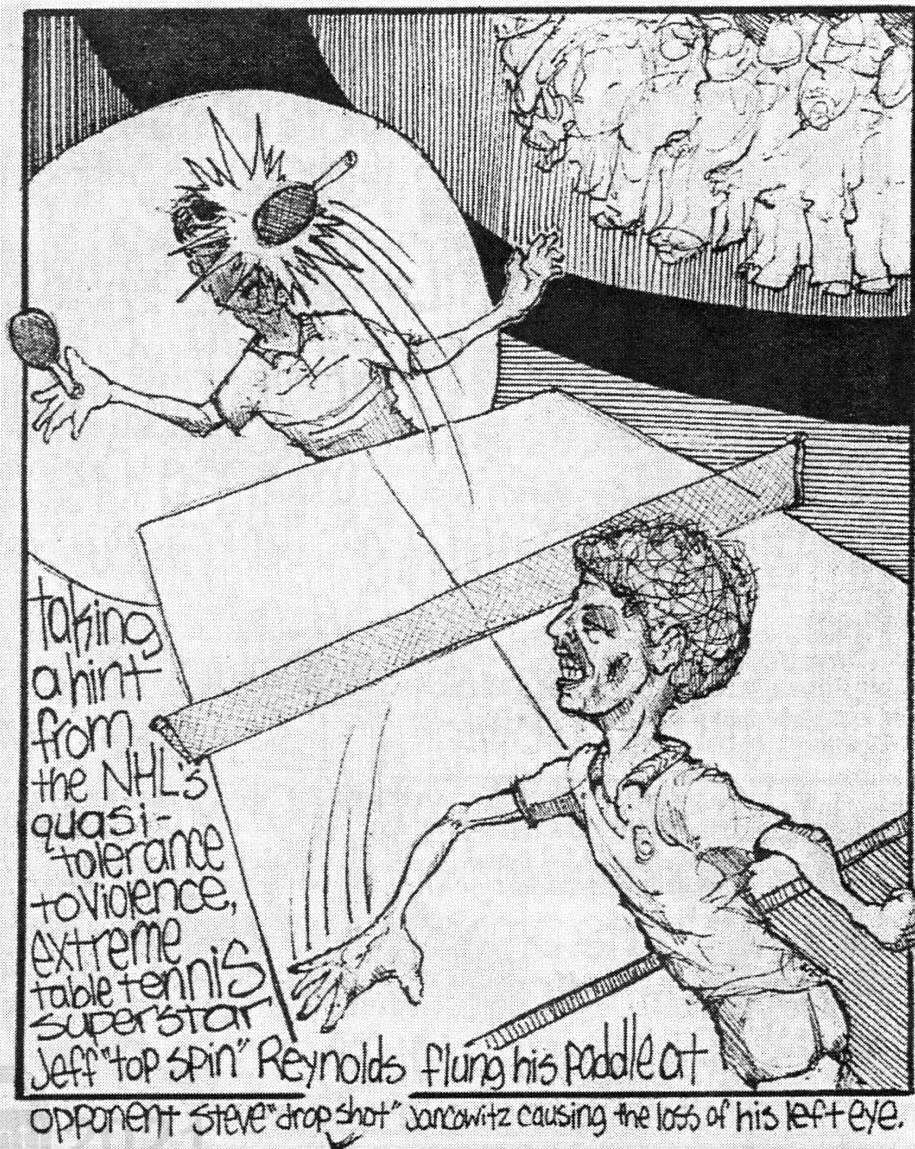
You may have noticed — I vomited before I entered. Please be assured this has everything to do with airplane food. I've done this for you before, and I'll do it again. The travel makes me weary, but I endure it. I don't think the photographs were damaged; the data should all be there.

Perhaps I'll be gone by the time you read this. We never seem to intersect. I always have to wipe away the cobwebs from your desk, as if you haven't been here for ages. In what strange way will you send the next assignment? I've much to do before then.

I trust the Canadian's work will be useful to you. We spent many long hours discussing his observations over the months. He is smart, but not diligent. You are diligent. I'm sure you'll know to burn this. I'm sure I'm just stating the obvious.

The pulsars call.

Take much care.



“Extreme Table Tennis”
Michael Twohig, 2004

Bobby's Auspices: A Better Tomorrow

Uzodinma Okehi

Looking back—and which other way can we look with believable clarity—I'll say that I can't remember much poetry concerning my own life. That is, speaking honestly, literature aside . . . Just a feeling not a confession, a regret, nor necessarily the truth of the way it was growing up through these years . . . Even, for instance, had I the good fortune to come of age on the beaches along the straits of Dakar, I suspect the same could be said. And though I did not, I can still easily imagine it . . . *Fortunate if only for those deep cobalt mornings at first light, padding through wet sand with the rest of the fellows, half-naked, shouting, chasing the soccer ball around between the half-submerged, side-lying hulks of ocean liners like beached whales, fast asleep . . .*



"D 'n A"
Israel Charney, 2004

Or something along those lines . . . Which is what children do on the shores of Dakar, that is, if one is to believe what one reads in travel books . . . We'd like to argue for truth in literature, for more of it, as if to continue some great tradition, and yet there has always seemed to me little difference whether recounting from memory or the realm of pure invention. I've never been to Dakar, as I said. I've never even considered it, as with so many other exotic locales that captivated me during the few years of college that I spent, propped up on my bed, buried in full-sized photo books such as Hiroji Kuboda's *Out of the East*. It was scenes from this book, scenes based on a kernel of reality, expanded on a page torn directly from the imagination, that planted the seed within me for future conversations on the subject of artifice . . . Both subject and substance . . . Sights, sounds, and echoes of such breathtaking power, that prove to this day too vivid to render justifiably in words. Up until a certain point in life, even when recounting my own objective truth, or trying to, I would inevitably end with a sinking feeling of guilt about my own equally lurid, suburban life, as much as any Dakar or Bangladesh, Hong Kong or wherever else. Guilt in that I always found it necessary to add things, to invent details in order to speak about any of it, my own life, with any exactitude.

Take for example that inevitable Pandora's box, the spiraling abyss that can almost always result from certain run of the mill questions such as a simple, "Why?"

Why? Well, I broke with my boyhood chum of many years for the simple fact that it was clear to me then that I had emerged from my struggles as a different, more instinctive kind of man . . . maybe not destined but climbing, fighting toward some new ideal, both remote and unprecedented . . . The gist of it was I could no longer go on living the old life in the mundane way that we had been accustomed to in the old days, and which he seemed quite content to continue steeping in indefinitely . . .

Or a more specific offering: what made you drop out of college and head for the orient? What was it about Hong Kong?

Ho, well what is there that I could say, really, about Hong Kong . . . I like the idea of a city bisected with hundreds, thousands of canals . . . A city stacked tier upon tier. In fact, a multitude of cities moving in all directions at once and with every manner of life thriving in between . . . An ambiance, rather than fact, I would say. A trick involved with contrast, shadows and light and misdirection which leads one to invent the sights, blurring past with words like magic, spectacle . . . So much of any city could be explored on identical terms and yet there was something about mornings, evenings in Hong Kong, stepping outdoors, so much to me like zooming down, dropping though feathered clouds into canals teeming with phosphorescent life . . .

And so on . . . bladity-blah . . . All of this to say that there is a certain something, an ingredient not to be taken for granted about anyone's life and experience. Even about the most mundane sort (person or life) that one could imagine. Some certain something that may often get lost in translation, strained out under the herald of "pure truth". I became accustomed to such windy digressions—a kind of lying, I do admit—coming flush up against the frequent occasions where the truth had to be searched for, fished out, and that is if I

MONASTIRAKI

Boutique - Gallery



antiques	art
books	comix
curiosities	decor
design	ephemera
fun	furnishings
jokes	lamps
magic	rentals
small press	vinyl
wierdness	zines

5478 St.Laurent

(coin St.Viateur)

Montréal, Quebec H2T1S1

514.278.4879

Mercredi à Dimanche

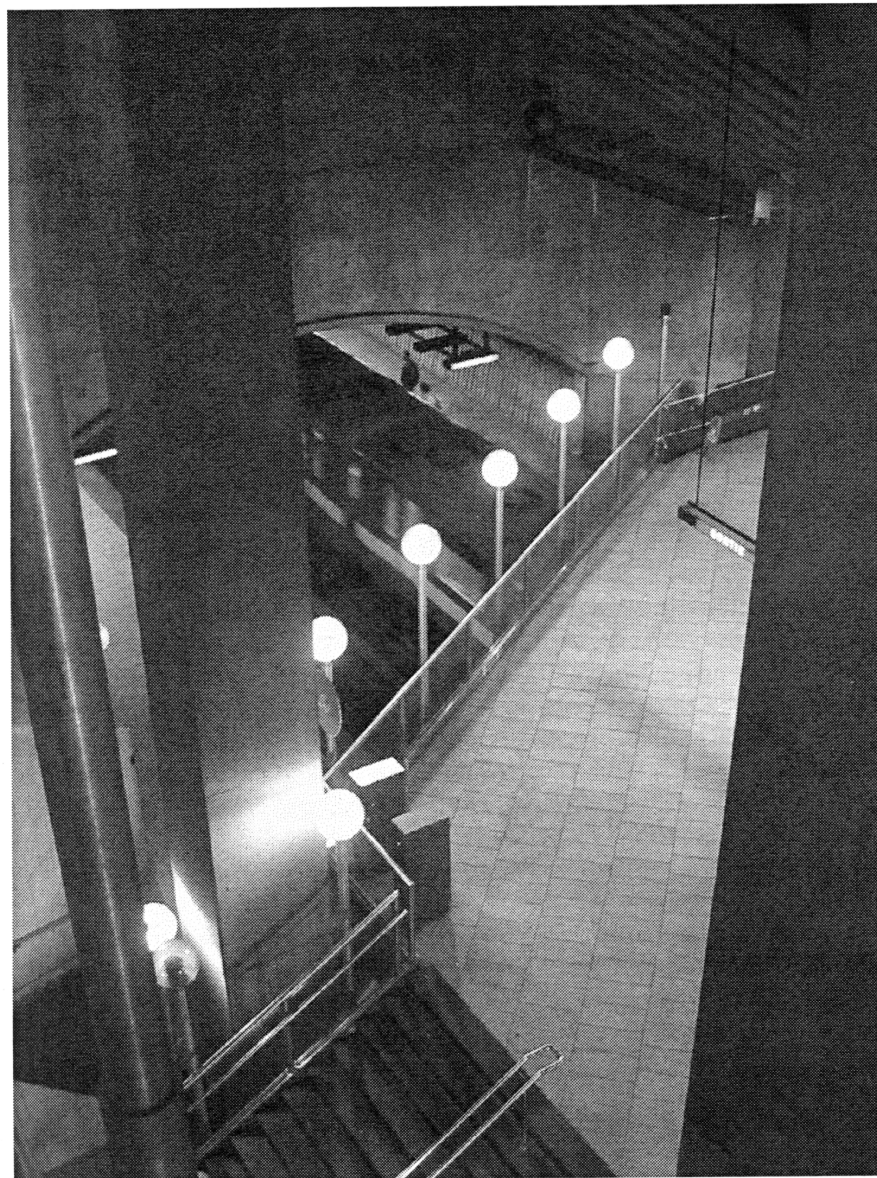
could come up with shades of it at all. Straightforward questions would cause me to grope about ludicrously, after which I would begin blathering like a high-speed monologue-machine. Fibbing, when in fact there was no good reason I could think of why my age-old friend now disgusted me, as I was and never will be any better than him, any loftier. And we all know how futile it is to describe the subjective appeal of one city over another, any more than one can explain how he has been captivated by one certain woman in particular, above all the rest. It was sifting through my own muddled inclinations in this way, my mis-amplifications and bumbled grapplings with the medium of reality, that I came across this: the role of imagination — creating truth — in both fact and fiction.

So for simplicity's sake, I got in the habit of acting coy, of misrepresenting myself as just an occasional liar . . . A spiritual liar . . . Diabolically truthful, as Henry Miller might have once said, but nonetheless a miscreant, feckless, true to type . . . Thinking along this vein, I am remembering my own version of the fabled hanging gardens of Babylon. I should add that it was this fantasy rendition that I preferred infinitely over what I later discovered to be the probable, scientific truth. By my own version, of course, I mean those gardens that I began to fabricate in mind little by little, with the mortar, brick and green thumb of pure imagination, after hearing the few cursory facts preceded with the clause: *As legend would have it . . .*

In my mind at least, this was the signal as I knew it for the shackles of reality to fall by the wayside . . . One's wildest dreams, or further. The sky was the limit . . . What I imagined was more like a domed city unto itself, looming over the landscape like a great coliseum encompassing dozens of modern city blocks . . . *From the outside, an edifice that seemed to fan out for miles, its zenith dissolved near the top by moving clouds . . .* But which could in no way compare to the splendors of the inside . . . More like a different, living jungle on each of many floors or tiers, supported by colonnades and archways intricately carved with frieze work depicting great myths and tales of heroism . . . Some ubiquitous stone chimeras, as the Persians seem to favor, which look like stunned lions with tiny serrated teeth and the tongues of snakes . . . So many of these rearing up, sometimes as fountains or forming the bookends of benches in the dense man-made vistas of flora and fauna . . . Mosaics of blue and purple tile . . . inlaid marble footpaths strewn with gravel polished to shine, for these ancient aristocrats to stroll across comfortably, listening to the sounds of this unnatural, natural world . . . The trickle, babbling of a stream issuing from the hidden mouths of insulated ceramic pipes . . . The catcalls of jungle creatures rollicking in the canopies . . .

And for the record, I was not so conscious of the fact that I was, as they say, just daydreaming. The concept of a hanging gardens at all, was in my mind so bold, so fantastic, it was my assumption that whatever I might think up, no matter how outrageous, would only be approaching it halfway. I dreamt of myself there, as the child that I was then, clad in robe and sandals . . . *Hanging gardens in the sense and for the way the outgrowth of fauna threatened to overwhelm each respective tier, and the way it was manicured so that it hung down symmetrically in tendrils of ivy, vine and moss, long boughs ripe with olives and draped around columns, obscuring partially the bas-relief dragons, scenes of nautical warfare; but hanging down, down into the space created by the shelf of each concentric level and the mesmerized way that I would on tip-toes peer over the lip of these huge staired balconies down into the void created by such great height and swathed at the vanishing point by mist, what I could recognize only by instinct at that age to be a wellspring of unlimited possibility . . .*

Already at that tender age, such elaborate fantasy had become the better part of my life . . . the substance . . . So much so that it wasn't even that much to my dismay learning the minuscule truth . . . If I recall correctly it was *The Seven Wonders of the Ancient World* by Clayton, Price and Finkel — the book that deflowered my dream, one auspicious winter afternoon . . . And to think how excited I had been, to have finally come across an authoritative text on the



"There It Goes"
Ilya Zaychik, 2004

subject! . . . The Seven Wonders of the Ancient World . . . And yet as the more rational, scientific-minded among us typically seem to do in trying to explore worlds of wonder, the end result felt more like an attempt to destroy things entirely, beginning with the subtle magic, that possibility that I spoke about. One can almost derive a certain vindictive smugness in the deadpan way that Mr. Finkel describes the various technological limitations that would make any sort of elevated garden a very diminutive affair, to the point that one "must" question whether or not such a wonder even actually existed:

"In our pursuit of the hanging gardens, we must pause to reflect on the unexpected silence on the part of all these native cuneiform texts on the question of anything that could be identified with the fabled Wonder. No Babylonian inscription refers to a building that can plausibly be identified with a royal and spectacular garden, especially one that, if the later accounts are to be believed, was such an extraordinary technological innovation. Let us look at what may be gleaned from later writers on the subject."

Perhaps I had suspected this kind of truth from the beginning, while delicately weaving my own impression, strand by strand . . . It wouldn't have been the first time . . . Possibly this was just what made my mind's work into such a desperate

opus of hyperbolic reinterpretation. Or maybe it is the effect reality is always doomed to have on our wildest dreams, dimming the lights so to speak, cropping the perspectives. Whatever the case, almost involuntarily, I continued to describe the Hanging Gardens in the previous way, more vividly in my opinion and as confident as if I had not only intricately toured their regions but also built them, by hand, from the ground up . . . Not just visually but structurally sound, as I had continued on to fathom the reasonably complex scheme of mirrors (light) and hydraulic pumps that would have been necessary to support such an expanse of greenery . . . If anything, the notion that I had out-dreamed on the so-called Wonders of the Ancient world gave me pause. It was a pat on the shoulder, needless to say. More important than any of this, though, was the fact that I began to prefer the idea of an imaginative life. That is, over what may have been the more practical options, suspecting that this was the better way. To me, the moral was that each of us has in mind more Art than the world can safely contain . . . More confusions . . . More daydreams . . . More observations, nagging at us . . . More big ideas about love and civilization . . . More hypocrisy, which sometimes only amounts to changing one's mind, as is to be expected . . . Also, more bitter moments, more secret doubts about oneself . . . himself, herself . . . Quixotically, more love for one's fellow man as well as more qualms against him . . . More morphological schemes concerning flamingoes and sunken treasure . . . More sights, smells and sounds, I think, than actually exist in nature . . . And of what I imagine, more than that, more imagination per individual than any other of God's creatures, catalogued by phylum and therefore that much less of an excuse for living any other way than

with the utmost compassion. A great irony, I would say, that though endowed with such superior human faculties as self-esteem, courage, etc., we nevertheless seem to remain stultified by this everyday world of our own creation, shrieking at the controls like monkeys adrift in space. Short of proselytizing, and to speak for myself, I would just like to remain thankful for my one tether, and that it was not clipped as with the umbilical soon after birth. Not truth but imagination!

But even this, the idea, would just be *my* truth, *my* objectivity. All of it I choose to mention circuitously, under the auspices of a more compassionate approach. Because, from my experience, it takes a wealth of imagination to live with compassion. To say the least . . . I might add, a conclusion at which one is always fated to arrive, one way or another. To live with this credo, to persist in it, even where circumstances tend to explode beyond reasonable comprehension; this is the fork in the road, opened, seemingly, with each and every one of our encounters, day in, day out. A penultimate compassion, as impossible as it sounds, that is the challenge. While on the other hand lies a charade ending in destruction, like an empty, soulless mirth.

Yet by the same token, it can often be quite shocking how few of us, comparatively, think to give this challenge even a fraction of the effort and consideration at our disposal . . . *Much less the whole of our imaginations!* . . . And I include myself in this indictment, first and foremost. I am in fact admonishing myself continuously, that I must learn how to fight with compassion, in that I've never been much of a tough guy. And I've seen too many movies where violence begets an excruciatingly uncomfortable death, befitting allegory, often rain-drenched. Nor am I a writer, or would I submit to the definition per-say, which is just a formal way of giving one's every little thought an unqualified emphasis. Why be formal about it? That's the way I've always felt. Why bother pinning on nametags when the important thing is to live with one's back up, whether as a writer, a charlatan, cosmonaut, professional custodian, or some secretary-type? . . . An architect! . . . As a bullshit artist! . . . Maybe as a raconteur, since leisure is what I mainly like to think about . . . But the reliable

foot by foot Danger Dan

this i drew of my foot,
using my foot to draw
with. i picked up the
marker, uncapped it and
drew this picture, and
signed my name all with
my foot. it reminds me of
a style that might be
found in one of picasso's
phases. im glad to know
if my right hand is lost i
have other choices. if you
dont believe me that i
drew this with my foot,
well, dana tarr has film
"foot"age of it. seriously.



fact is that no matter how far-fetched one goes with his or her take on life, there will always be intervals, possibly even a bulk of the time when the weight of the world becomes too much, too crushing. Too much civilization and too little refuge! Whether real or imagined, there are bound to be instances, surely, where one feels abused, belittled and trod underfoot . . . Fatigued . . . Punished, at wit's end . . . Whipped . . . Torn apart by life itself . . . It can never be more crucial than at these crossroads that one be able to dredge up from within, whatever gumption necessary to strike back, to lash out with all the compassion and humanity that one can bring to bear.

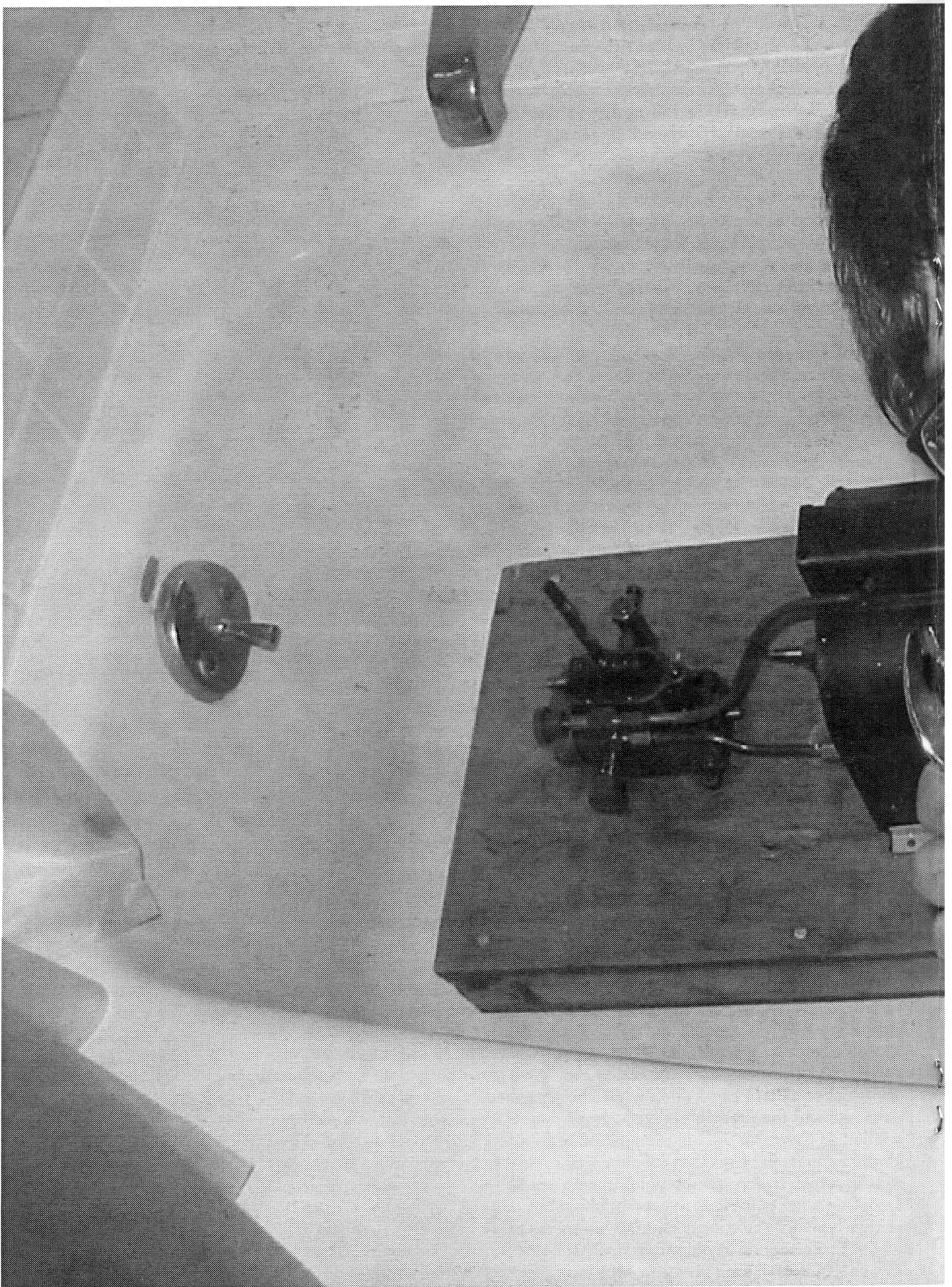
I mean now only to speak imaginatively, in the present tense, or possibly, past perfect . . . Better participles, to cover all my bases. I have so far outstripped myself putting an answer first, before that all-too familiar and perplexing question . . . Why write? Why do anything? Why even make such an appeal, in such left-handed style, and for whose consideration? And as for me, now, mentally typing, writing this all out in my mind while I idle my way through another futile shift at my day job, from all of this talk, what's the big idea? Furthermore, what does any of it have to do with compassion? I ask that of myself with the same degree of concern with which I notice in the world-at-large that we are now a nation at war. That is to say, for all the difference it makes to me and those of my ilk. Or to put it another way, what difference does it make while we all still have to put up such a struggle just to live with compassion. I want to relax, nothing more. I haven't even begun to think about peace on earth, nor will I be able to in this lifetime, the way things are shaping up. What could seem simpler than a lifelong siesta? And yet I find that for a moment's peace it can often be necessary to go all the way to Hell and back. Thus I put pen to paper. I attempt to do so imaginatively, under the auspices of another, better tomorrow that lies waiting in the wings. Wide awake, I find that I can fantasize unabashedly while tethered by a gossamer strand to what remains objective about reality.


And I admonish myself, *fight harder*, standing on the corner of Twelfth and Broadway, waiting for them to close up shop outside the bookstore that, for me, is just another in a long line of hopeless bookstore jobs. But it is a swell autumn night . . . Nicely lit from below with searing lights, blazing, clangorous traffic and a pitch sky touched with purples . . . I am standing with Doug, from the review department, and he is waiting for a girl who works behind the registers. It is their first date and he is nervous, fidgeting with his satchel, though I can tell it is comforting to him for us to be standing together this way, both of us pretending to be so aloof. He insists that I am here to ridicule him and I choose to talk around this point, as it is, like most points, only partially true. I've been laughing about it uproariously, his date, all evening, very true, and it is a delicate balance. The reality may have something to do with an erotic coloring book that I came upon while shelving medical reference earlier in the week. Amidst the predictable pornography shots was, inexplicably, a picture entitled *La Gormande* . . . Like some kind of snouted, hairy incubus, that at first glance appears to be sucking its own dick . . . But in fact it is only a plant, the edge of which the creature is holding between its legs . . . A thick tropical bush, sprouting a fan of penises instead of blossoms, or penii, as it were — which is neither here nor there, only that the resemblance has caused me to begin calling him *petit Gormande* in my mind. As in: *bon chance, frere Gormande!* Doug in his jean shorts, with a long scar down his face, only superficially concealed by his beard and mustache. That and his thin-lipped smile, all of which has been the fuel for my hilarity throughout most of the evening. I realize, both through instinct as well as second-hand information that the girl is only pitying him by

stationæry



"Cancer Panda"
Frank Barbara, 2004



 "This Man is Now a Monster"
Daniel Spitzberg, 2004



2021

stationæry

going out tonight, that there is no legitimate chance and that his hopes will most probably be ground into the dust. He is killing time now, telling me about being a writer, how it comes in so handy for him, talking to girls. Not that he plans to brag about it, but if the subject comes up he won't hesitate to use it to his advantage. It's what he does after all, a good use of his keen insight into the human condition. And listening to him saying this it is all I can do to keep my sides from splitting. But at the same time I realize I am also just as fallible. Just as human, in the same hopeful way. All of which makes me a type of vassal to his cause, in that I want him to beat the odds, to win her heart somehow . . . More than that, if it were in some way possible, under the circumstances, to comport myself with empathy, compassionately . . . And I try to imagine what he must dreaming about at this very moment, beneath all the bravado . . . What he dreams about on nights like this, no matter how sentimental or beyond the pale . . . Here along with him, reaching out, I strain toward life beyond the pale, outside of the rules, I stretch my imagination . . .



"Ozclage"
Fianna MacGregor, 2004

Conversation with an Actor Aliya Pabani

Silent pause
[scratches his head]

The-cattle-rancher-from-Alabama
looking-for-the-ideal-wife. Holden-Caulfield
type-window-smashing-fists
and-a-dead
brother.

Swinging-legged-on-a-chair-with
a-remorseful-slump-glancing
uncomfortably-at-the-black-eyed-kid/
victim-next-to
him.

A face to meet all the faces.
A worthy performance for every discerning eye.

But under the sour milk coffee shop lights
the saddest watery blue eyes in the world stare
at ripped sugar packets and he says,

"I am not really comfortable—I just play one on T.V., you know what I mean?"

The Father Weeds

Nathaniel G. Moore

1.

Maybe, as I move from the barrel of sheets
And sandbags of sun-spent pillows, I can recall the
Colour of the moth's wings as it carried the object
Towards you.

Yes, it was first in that charcoal dream where I saw the
Bell shaped ruin placed neatly in your mouth.
Something completely out of place, lodged in your jaw.

You spit it out and woke up.

I did not put it there, it had swarmed you,
It had a pollen scent, maybe it was honey.

There have been several minutes this morning
Where I have done nothing but rub the corduroy skirt
That lies at the foot of the bed.

I hold you close to me now, in the lukewarm
Broth we wade deep back and forth pushing skin
Until we have a **real** hold that smells like sugar or soft porn.

When I start to tell you about my father
You will look at my face to see if I've become him.

This is what I tell myself.
You will never meet him.
Because I have.

2.

What we do, instead of meeting my father.
We shop for food, grow into each other's shirts
And wade at municipal pools. We exchange eye
Colours and recipes, we trade on a corporeal level,
Beyond the code of genes.

It never ends. We commute to one another;
As age old concrete tears at our denim.

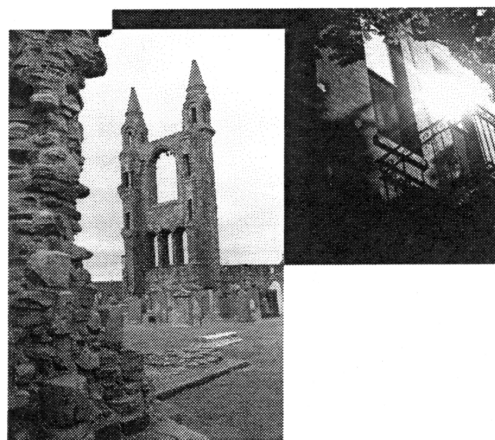
Can the marigolds I planted twenty years ago
Make a comeback? Repel the insects from ebbing
My father's senseless suburban crop?

The zucchinis swallowed the yard
With their tentacles, the tomatoes
And green beans too had their say
In the green tangle.

All weekend long he picked at the virile weeds
In his out-of-office experience.



Anna Seifried, 2004



"Summer Afternoon, St. Andrews"
"Glare"

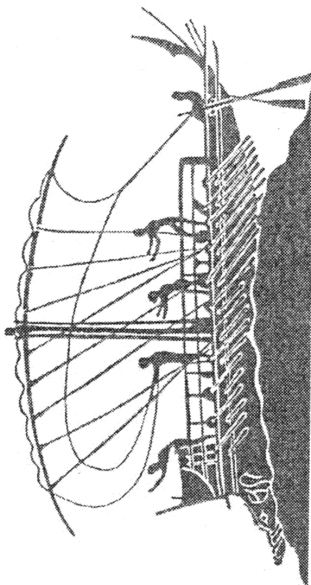
Andrew Ladd, 2004

ARGO BOOKSHOP

1915 Ste-Catherine W.
Tel. (514) 931-3442

Montréal, Québec H3H 1M3

PAPERBACKS & CANADIAN BOOKS



Using cratered hands and knees screwing
Against the earth his toughened gut hung dry
From the tight out-of-print yellow
Cotton t-shirt that was never thrown out.

He toiled, sweated, tanned; his cuticles cut the soil,
Pinching the nerves of the unwanted plants
Until the early morning tide of light
Witnessed him with a pen sell the land.

He left the weeds behind.
Those joints had done their domestic
Pantomime, but the job was never done.

3.

Now, with similar movement, in far off retirement
Package he has designed inside of himself,
He darns his cheek against a swollen tea bag.
Each year another stitch is added, melds slowly.

In April for his birthday I catch him, with the needle
Through his cheek, he answers the telephone,
Which sometimes transmits my voice.

The dried leaves sealed in their filter,
Have become new stubble.

But he never drinks.
No one tells him to let it steep.
No one stops him.
No one pulls his cratered hand
From the threaded eye.

He does no more weeding
In his big trailer backyard.
He has become one of them,
A prickly creature given nutrients,
Allowed a space. A growth pattern.

My father's tongue is a spade,
His narrow jaw hurtles
Into the night of dreams
That never pokes from the earth.

He has, at last, collapsed
Into perennial shade, the path
Of an unrecovered seed.

Too many silent days,
Lodged between him and his hands.

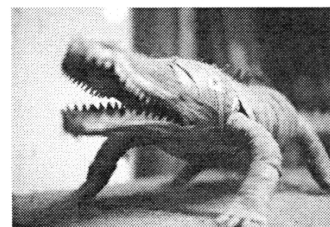
I will plant this memory no further.
Because I cannot grow this way.
Or refuse to try.



Ilya Zaychik, 2004

Hop

Patrick Eamonn



Anna Seifried, 2004

I happened to be in the Life Café with Carl, Mark, and Patch, with a bladder swelled from lager. I needed a piss, when I bumped into Joanna; she was coming out the lav. Right off, she said, "I'm three weeks late," which was me fucked, without so much as a how-do-you-do-Tommy. I'd been feeling on to something till then: buoyed up, on the peak, like. 'Cept that some nub put on Radiohead. I checked the faces on my way to the lav, on the hunt for some pleased fucker's grin to smash in. Who willingly selects Radiohead on a night out? Then out stepped Joanna. "Should be a fucking criminal offense," I began, with a he-e-ey kid, sliding my arm round her neck. I pointed toward the ceiling, indicating the speakers, meaning the song. "Good band, yeah—no debate here. 'Cept they're not a proper soundtrack to maintain the peak with. Brings you down. Specially *The Bends*. Eh? Should be outlawed from every bar on Earth." But, anyway, then she fired into that three-weeks-late business.

I squared up. Pointed out that I was spot on about protection. Always. But she said that doesn't fucking matter. Condoms are 98% effective. I'd drawn my lot and wound up as a sacrificial loss to the losing 2%. So deal with it, Tommy. Deal with it? "Well I need to piss," I put, flatly, but truthfully. My bladder was busting capacity, man, muscling all other organs out of its vicinity. The pressure I felt most, though, was in and on my head; a real vice-like clamp, and no immediate relief, not from that. I bolted the door and unloaded, groaning, flapping my dick around as the jet died down, shaking the drips, feeling lighter, but feeling worse, all over. I skimmed the graffiti on the walls, then looked long into the mirror—but fuck, man, what was I going to luck into, hidden in here? A ripper of a headache from stale urine mixing with fucking antiseptic odor absorbents, the supply of one unable to contend with the volume of the other. I staggered a bit in the confines, gunned for the toilet, flushed. Zipped up, stepped out again.

There was Joanna's crew, grouped round the other end of the bar, by the kitchen. I debated over which avenue was the appropriate choice to make, given the circumstances. Deal with the situation in a timely fashion and decisive manner? Or do I ride the fucker out? Couldn't decide. Consigned myself to the path of least resistance, which chanced to open just then in the direction of the boys. Crowd parted, and that was me, reclaiming my stool. I scored a double Jack with a Brooklyn Lager to chase from Mark, who's finally lucked into a job, and was flush with a full week's pay. Retribution, man. I smacked his back and warned, "Don't be running off now, right? Two months' income, man—I've two fucking months' worth to make up for tonight. Keyspan, ConEd . . . retribution, man, retribution . . ."

"I'm picking up what you're putting down, man . . . picking up what you're putting down," the boy said. He was positively beaming from his stool. He waved his hands, palms up, in an expression of jovial wonder. "Just looking to spread the wealth, like. A little deposit back in the karma bank, eh?" Sure enough, he'd be broke in the morning. But the boy had scored a night of feeling royal, so why spoil it? For him, or for me? Soon it was ten, 2-for-1 bottles of Bud and R.R., and the scales tipped from quality to quantity. We packed that shit down. The night was soaring, and we, experienced pilots, the lot. Spot on. Clinging to the trajectory, man. Just trusting in its path, like Ophelia . . . Ophelia, cop a fucking feel yeah, and Bruce came on and soon we were singing along, only splintering off into four different keys, but joining up again at the end to pour our lungs into one last chorus of "Rosalita," and that was Mark's wallet, tapped. The Patch lost the luck of the draw, and we scored the next round off him, and Carl's handing me mine and we're clapping each other on the back and really on the peak, now, when the box kicks out with "My Ancestral Homeland, New Jersey" and Carl remarks that's funny: two songs back to back, both with the line *swamps of Jersey* in 'em; what are the odds, like, and I'm saying, remember that psychic on East 13th, the one you dragged me into, the one who broke out with this rant bout how I was headed for a kid and wife and all that fucking weight, man, sure as fucking rain, it was in the cards, like. Carl says, "Man," and here he breaks off and shakes his head sadly, closing his eyes; then sighs, "that was a counselor, and you were supposed to go back . . .", and the nubby fuck's scoffing real good at that one, but behind him is Joanna's crew, headed out the door. Joanna's facing me before she steps out to glare at me for a sec, and I wish this vice would quit teasing me and run its course already, and pop my skull and splatter everyone with pulp.

Matthew Hollett

i bought roy's old royl typewriter
sucha beautiful old machine & its ink still works
such heavy keys too and loud clackclackclack
immensely heavy, impractical, unportable
unreliable, thoughtful-making
slow-going, ricketyexcellent
dark toothy bleary-eyed
irresponsible old fossil

it is impossible to be discreet with a typewriter
it is too loud and troublesome
every thot a bulletshot
Blamm into the quiet paper

i love its lawless lowercase
its dustmystery mechanism
its physical presence and sound
its unforgivability
its more camera than computer
cLicK and it captures a thought
archaic and honest
in all its loud
awkward glory:

everything seems unparallellably declarable.



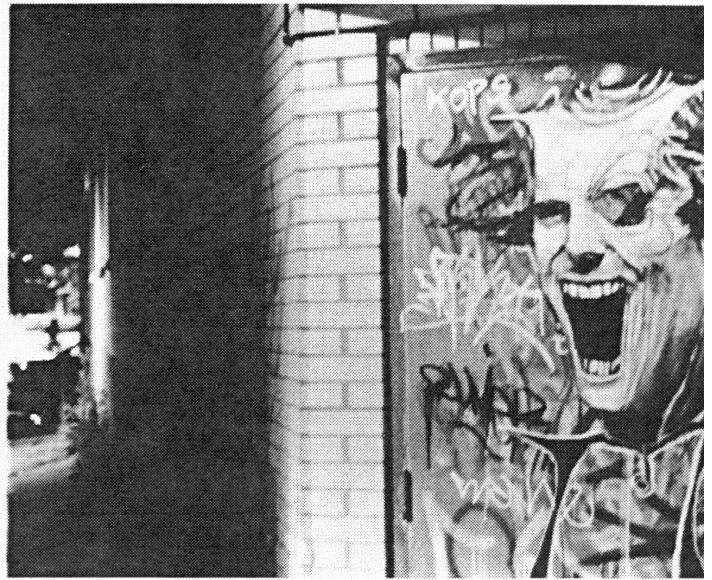
"Siesta Time"
Noa Landes, 2004

Boris: a poem in 29 stanzas

Paul Kremsky

Dedicated to old Boris,
Just in case anyone chose
To not regard you as a GREAT FIGURE,
Or in case anyone made the mistake
Of taking you seriously.

“Boo.”
Nick Phelps, 2004



Whenever you show up at some party
Where you don't know barely anyone,
With nothing but a rackofbeer,
The first person you meet will be Boris,
“He had become the HOLY GOOF.”

You will recognize Boris because maybe
He will have springy untamed hair, maybe
Tallandlanky,
And he'll come right up to you grinning,
Already longtime drunk.

This time, in Lexington, his name really *is* Boris,
Or it isn't, but everyone calls him
That, because he is a RussianJew,
Everyone knows him, but he still has no one
Really to talk to except you, or maybe he is just kind.

First he introduces himself, then he introduces
To you some prettyish girl with black
Hair and pointedjawbones,
Her name is like tiffany or something
And you don't really trust her; she moves away.

Then he is midbeer and he spits it all out,
On purpose, maybe; it is comical,
Beersud flyings spittled out
All over, sticky mist,
And he says Hey! Hey! Hey!

I recognize you Paul, I knew you a few
Years ago, we used to spar together,
In that class, chokeholds! and figurefours!
That class with a few fat men in sweatpants
Who nobody wanted to train with, remember those old struggles?

I remember the class but not Boris —
But I lie, saying
Yeah yeah yeah yeahman,
Now I do remember, damn that
Was something, and now this, seeing you here!

But then he gets the stupid idea
That you should know to expect him to get,
Exactly the idea of comicwildness
That he expects of himself,
And he says we should go to the backyard to spar.

Not to be a poor sport, you agree,
And he leads the way out, but first
He walks through a screendoor
Without opening it, and it falls
From its hinges onto a guy named Mike.

Fuck! he says. Sorry! but hey we're going out
To thishere backyard to do
A little sparring, chokeholds et-cetera,
It will be a blast, everyone:
Follow us to see what happens.

(Yes I know this is a ridiculous thing,
For me to be outhere to sprawl with this Boris,
Outside on this wet yardgrass,
But what the hell, hell, hell,
It will be fun, I will probably not lose.)

And of course a monster crowd forms around
To watch Boris and his antics,
And somebody must've asked me my name,

Because they root me on, because
Ofcourse they won't cheer for Boris.

So we go at it and pretty soon I'm
Sitting on his chest and choking the
Airoutofhim,
Like you do when you're winning
The way we learned to spar.

But the stupid drunk doesn't tap out,
Like you're supposed to when you can't
Breathe, he just gagglesandcoughs,
And grins up at me, and struggles,
And it keeps on going for a real time.

So some other kid, named Fitzy, he starts
In on Boris while he's down under me, delivering
Cheep light cheekslops,
Laughing and playing
And pissing off poor barelybreathing Boris.

Now Boris sputters up at me, eyes only now
Looking worried and angry
And hotfirefilled, and he chokes
Paul, Paul, Paul man,
Get the fuck off me, that's it now.

I let him up like he asked and wham! He's off
Tackling Fitzy headfirst
Headlow and in his stomach, driving
With his feet and pedalling
Fitzy back, side punches coming liberally and wildly.

And it all looks good until Fitzy figures out
What is going on here! and
He reacts by swinging downon
Boris' back, one, two, wham wham
He starts punching down on him kind of hard.

Meanwhile I am sweating and laughing on the grass
Thinking Boris! Boris! you
Wildman, one match wasn't enough
You drunk! I am grinning and laughing;
We all are for a few moments, mostly.

Then of course we realize that Boris is not
Fucking around right now,
He is headfirstmad, running-
Angry wild for some
Unknown not jokingaround reason. Has he just snapped?

But he is still Boris, and no match for the more
Natural Fitzy, who was blessed and born
With straight shorthair and well-dressed,
With Fenway's Boston accent and
About onehundredsixty pounds and even athletic.

So now we have Boris bleeding from the nose,
And people gasp and finally
Fitzy is pulled offofhim,
And whoa jesus there is
Blood all over this lawn wetgrass now, and I'm laughing in it.

Someone brings Boris in and someone else
Tries to calm Fitzy down who is
Saying *sonofabitch sonofabitch*
I shouldn't laugh but I can't stop
Who would've thought? Who would've?

So after a while Fitzy is calmed down,
And I go inside and talk to
Angrygirl tiffany, who is angry
About Fitzy, actually,
She is sitting in the corner with a beer saying:

Goddamn Fitzy, he does this all the time.
He knows what buttons to press, and
Boris is a fucking windupdoll;
He's the only one Fitzy can actually pick on
Even though Boris is taller. He's a fucking asshole.

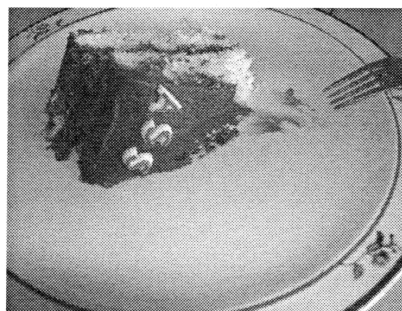
Boris walks past and I quickly leave tiffany,
And stop him to talk,
Heyman yo, I'm sorry if I
Helped to start that fight thing,
Are you alright now, you relaxed and calm and regular?

And he turns on me and says,
Hey man, hey, that was a
GREATMATCH, that was *somethin*
Huh? You had me down a while
But I didn't tap out, right? it was a *match!*

And I laugh shocked and say, haha YES,
It was some epic struggle,
Some human pridemess, it was
Amazing, Boris, YES, man,
But what about Fitzy? What about him?

And Boris, who is tallandlanky with
Wild hair and who has been grinning
Allnight, he says grinning wider and wilder,
Wiping leftover blood from his nostril,

"Man," he says, "Man, *fuck* Fitzy!"



Michael Hunt, 2002

Dec. 5/ '03
Melissa Reiter

the darkness is like frosting on a cupcake
and sprinkles dance like starlight through the shutters
the man who works construction has a heartache
the engine of your pinto coughs and sputters
You say you can't make someone fall in love
You say that wasn't what you'd meant at all
To keep the cold out you wear gardening gloves
I hear your heavy footsteps in the hall
My teardrops land in teacups, splash and spill
The cold in this apartment leaks through cracks
A caulking gun in hand, I sit and fill
The spaces as the air plans its attacks
I tell you Leonard Cohen says it's true
That where the cracks are, that's how light comes through



Ynès Wu, 2004

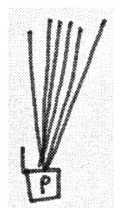
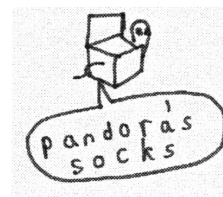
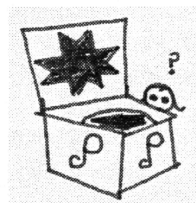
Daniel Cambil

IDEA FOR A PLAY about PANDORA

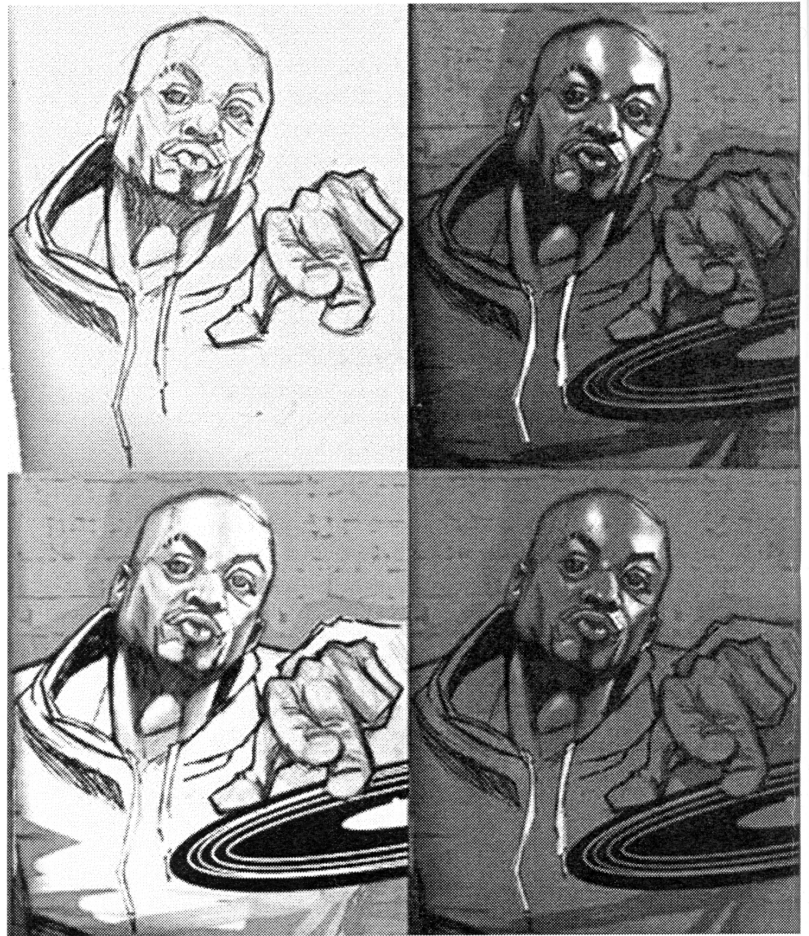
i call it PANDORA'S SOCKS.

or

PANDORA'S BOX OF JUICE.



box
of juice



This One's a Keeper Ilya Zaychik

I can't find it anywhere! I have turned this world upside-down, but I have no idea where I put it. There's a girl coming over for dinner any minute now and I need it, I need it more than ever. I don't want to fuck this up. I need the real thing, no more imitations, no more flimsy, dollar-store kind, you get me? I will not be caught off guard again, and left embarrassed and speechless, you hear me?

I checked my stack of books. Where else could it be? Not in the folds of Sartre, or under the Vonnegut, or behind the Dostoyevsky, or in that space between the Hesse and Burroghs. The dog-eared Aristotle had no answers and neither did the underlined Borges. I thought it was behind the bookshelf, but all I found there was a tattered Fitzgerald. Maybe I had left by the Joyce, but no such luck. It wasn't with the Eggers on my nightstand, the one with the worn-out spine. I tore my desk inside-out, thinking it would be with the Woolf, or the Camus, or at least the Proust, but it wasn't there! It wasn't there! As a last ditch effort, mostly out of desperation, I ransacked my closet, finding only dusty volumes of Heller, Adams, Dumas--real basic stuff. Wait! The Kafk--

The doorbell! She's here! I'm fucked! What am I gonna say?!

'Hey, asshole, did you check your pockets?'

No! I didn't! My pockets, brilliant! Here it is, right in my back pocket, in the back pocket of my acid-washed, paint-stained jeans! Oh, thank god! I've been looking for this for months! Oh, but it seems like years, years.

My voice, my very own, unique voice! I hope she likes it!

CONTRIBUTORS

Anca Szilágyi currently resides in Brooklyn, NY. Her work has appeared in Hotel, Montage, Scrivener Creative Review, Fire With Water, and on Tangmonkey.com. Her favorite political figure is Don Knots, and her collaborative art project-in-progress can be seen at letterlove.blogspot.com anca.szilagyi@mail.mcgill.ca

Matthew Hollett is a poet and photographer originally from Newfoundland. He is currently composing poems about found photos, and photoblogging compulsively. He lives in Montreal and at www.matthewhollett.com. matthewhollett@gmail.com

Nick Phelps is scared when he sees his pictures develop and, consequently, still sleeps with his blankie. Honest. He has also heard of vegetarians who make exceptions for bacon. itsalldark@hotmail.com

Frank Barbara has worked every spare minute he's had since he was ten. Now that he's no longer working full time for "The Man" he looks forward to Saturday Morning Cartoons? You can see his work at: www.musecube.com/franx/ frba77@yahoo.com

Israel Charney is a poly-artist with a window onto rue Marie-Anne. He changes the images with the moon. Scope out these and more at www.icharney.com icharney@videotron.ca

Mike Twohig is an art school casualty, suspended in limbo between a compulsion to self-expression and chasing the elusive "career" in illustration. His drawings and word-play are exposed through a self-published project titled "coldhandsdeadheart." See angelfire.com/ill/miketwohig, and MikeTwohig.artconspiracy.com m_twohig@hotmail.com

Ynès Wu is on her way to discovering the cure to AIDS. You can find her sipping wine with friends and bitching to them about how she can never find time to read Baudelairean poetry anymore. After grueling hours investigating bacterial cultures, she keeps myself sane by writing nonsensical words, drawing intoxicated figures and occasionally crying to Radiohead songs. shallow_eyes@hotmail.com

Uzodinma Okehi, at worst, is still a believer and it is his humble hope that you might think to check out his book/survey/comic, Sleep Tickles, out where comics are sold this winter. Okehi@hotmail.com

Fianna MacGregor is the owner of A Duck Press, Ink. She publishes zines on cooking, travel and art. She is currently embarking on a world travel adventure to explore the food and art of other countries. You can check out her zines at www.rascalandrogue.com rascalandrogue@yahoo.com

Andrew Ladd is an honorary Canadian and a dishonorary everything else. He takes pictures, writes fiction, and maintains an incendiary blog at <http://hotscot.blogspot.com>. He enjoys things that are fun." a.good.ladd@worldnet.att.net

Melissa Reiter is an english literature student at McGill University. She enjoys long walks on the beach, riding roller coasters, and taking long, luxurious bubble baths. She also enjoys sarcasm. melissareiter@hotmail.com

Aliya Pabani is: the girl who tripped on the sidewalk while looking at a strange bird and whose writing has been predominantly in runny ink pen on discarded napkins, new to everything, staring at you, wanting to say hi. free_tibet4me@yahoo.com

Nathaniel G. Moore is a writer. He divides his life between the 416/514 area codes. His turn-ons include nudity, oxygen, parsley and corporate domination. He and Warren Auld make up the boy band Proper Concern. They will be on ZeD TV this autumn (CBC). More: www.notho.net. nath8nathaniel@yahoo.com

Paul Kremsky is now living in Chicago. He has published poems and short stories all over North America, including two bold works, "Boris" and "Three Road Stories." paul.kremsky@uchicago.edu

Daniel Cambil: "i just moved to montréal. i enjoy the fountains. i make images for fashion and art. You may contact me for projects if you like my pictures. my website is visuel.org" lepinktrash@yahoo.ca

Noa Landes is studying languages of all sorts. nmlandes@yahoo.com

Michael Audi: aspiring hotel lounge singer. Big Mike is a proud member of Mamoun's, enjoys eating animals, dog burgers, and karaoke. maudi@po-box.mcgill.ca

Danger Dan: "creation; a lot like shitting. you cant create much of anything without experiencing adventure to the full, much like you cant shit without eating, and you cant shit healthy unless you eat a good meal. which is why it is important to me that life have a healthy dose of adventure and drama for my mind to shit into being as works of art./ Shit litters the past/ The future is paved in gold./ so pretty, so much....." His stuff is mostly at www.livejournal.com/users/danieldubois/ thedangerdan@hotmail.com

Daniel Spitzberg & Ilya Zaychik built this thing you are holding. They did the design, placed in the content, and created some of the works herein. They are the editors. stationaery@yahoo.com

